

Application/Control No.: 09/977,884

Examiner: HOWELL, Daniel W.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims of the present application under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.121(c), as indicated below:

1 – 12 (Cancelled)

13. (New): A drilling machine for drilling wood, plastics material and aluminum variable thickness vertically arranged on-edge supported panels, each said panel having a panel front surface, a panel rear surface, a panel bottom edge and a panel top edge, said drilling machine comprising a panel processing top rotary turret and an intermittent bottom conveyor for supporting said bottom edge of said panel and intermittently horizontally driving said panel to said rotary turret, a first top vertically movable horizontal abutting and guiding roller means comprising a plurality of substantially adjoining horizontal axis rotary rollers for abutting against said top edge of said panel, and a second abutting and guiding vertical axis rotary roller means for abutting against and guiding said rear surface of said panel.

14. (New): A drilling machine according to claim 13 wherein said rotary turret comprises a tool bearing rotary head coupled to a horizontally and vertically movable supporting element, said rotary head including a rotary head drum supporting a plurality of rotary head elements, each said rotary head element having either a single or a multiple tool supporting mandrel.

15. (New): A drilling machine according to claim 13, wherein said bottom conveyor comprises a conveyor belt, including a plurality of interconnected conveyor belt links sliding on a guiding frame, said conveyor belt being driven by a toothed belt also supported by said frame.

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16. (New): A drilling machine according to claim 15, wherein said toothed belt is entrained between two end pulleys and is guided along a top flat trajectory by a plurality of top belt guiding rollers, said top flat trajectory having an intermediate region including a bottom toothed pulley arranged between a pair of smooth surface pulleys cooperating with said bottom toothed pulley to define a downward directed toothed belt loop.

17. (New): A drilling machine according to claim 13, wherein said turret is mounted on a supporting element which can be vertically driven along vertical guides defined on an upright, said supporting element being controlled by a ball recirculating screw system for vertically driving said turret, and wherein said turret is rotatively driven by a brushless motor and epicycloidal reducing unit.

18. (New): A drilling machine according to claim 13, wherein said second abutting and guiding roller means for abutting against said rear surface of said panel comprise top, intermediate and bottom rollers respectively for abutting against and guiding a top, an intermediate and a bottom portion of said rear surface of said panel.

19. (New): A drilling machine according to claim 13, wherein said vertical axis rollers are supported by a section member which is so driven as to fit a position of said vertical axis rollers to the thickness of said panel.

20. (New): A drilling machine according to claim 13, wherein said drilling machine further comprises a plurality of bottom holding wheels coupled to a plurality of vertically extending uprights forming a fixed supporting wall for supporting said panel.